

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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AID-20 RSR-01 /105 W

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R 041450 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4076

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

USCINCSO

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USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT HO

SUBJECT: LIBERAL PARTY SPEAKS OUT

1. SUMMARY: LIBERAL PARTY WENT ON RECORD MARCH 30 WITH ANALYSIS OF PRESENT POLITICAL ORDER. " MANIFESTO" CONTAINED EXPECTED REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR CONSTITUTIONALITY AND EXPOSITION OF LIBERAL CREDENTIALS AS HONDURAS' ORIGINAL SOCIAL REFORMERS. WHILE IT ALSO INCLUDED SOME DIRECT CRITICISM OF GENERAL LOPEZ AND ARMED FORCES, EMBASSY DOES NOT EXPECT GOH REACTION.

2. AS AN OUTGROWTH OF LARGE MARCH 24 MEETING IN SAN PEDRO SULA, LIBERAL PARTY (PLH) HAS RELEASED " MANIFESTO" DATED MARCH 30, GIVING PLH POSITION ON PRESENT STATE OF NATIONAL AFFAIRS. DECLARATION, SIGNED BY PARTY' S CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHICH INCLUDES " DEMOCRATIC LEFT" AND " RODISTA" REPS, CONTAINS FOLLOWING MAIN POINTS:

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(A) SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL, IN ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT DECISIONS, MUST BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESULTS; BUT IN MOMENT OF MULTIPLE AND SERIOUS NATIONAL PROBLEMS, ARMED FORCES HAS FAILED TO PROVIDE IDEOLOGY OR ORIENTATION, AND GENERAL LOPEZ SEEMS UNINTERESTED IN SUCCESS OF EXPERIMENT (PARAGRAPH 3 BELOW).

(B) LIBERAL PARTY RETAINS HISTORICAL POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT; ONLY AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE BODY ASSURES EXPRESSION OF BROAD POPULAR WILL NECESSARY FOR VIABLE SOLUTIONS TO COUNTRY' S PROBLEMS.

(C) MILITARY GOVERNMENT IS THUS BY NATURE TRANSITORY AND PROVISIONAL.

(D) LIBERAL PARTY HAS LONG AND LOUDLY CALLED FOR PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION, WHICH COULD BE PUT INTO EFFECT BY A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GOVERNMENT.

(E) " WITH SAME HONESTY", HOWEVER, THAT PLH CRITICIZES REGIME' S ERRORS AND FAILURES, IT " WILL RECOGNIZE UNRESERVEDLY THOSE SINCERE ACTIONS FOR BENEFIT OF POPULAR MASSES WHICH (THE GOVERNMENT) CARRIES OUT IN COURSE OF ITS PROVISIONAL EXISTENCE."

3. ALTHOUGH MANIFESTO IS, OVERALL, MODERATE IN TONE AND CONSISTENT WITH STANCE INDIVIDUAL LIBERAL SPOKESMEN HAVE TAKEN SINCE COUP, IT CONTAINS ONE PASSAGE DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF GENERAL LOPEZ: " TO THE FOREGOING (MILITARY' S LACK OF IDEOLOGY, COUNTRY' S MYRIAD PROBLEMS, ISOLATION OF TRADITIONAL POLITICAL FORCES) MUST BE ADDED THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT (OFFICIAL TITLE " CHIEF OF STATE" APPARENTLY DELIBERATELY AVOIDED), WHO GIVES IMPRESSION OF NOT BEING INTERESTED IN HIS PROVISIONAL EFFORT, CONTRIBUTING TO WORSENING STATE OF DISCOURAGEMENT AND DESPAIR OF HONDURAN PEOPLE. ALL THE FACTS EXPRESSED ACCENTUATE THE CRISIS, BECAUSE POLITICAL-MILITARY ADVENTURE REPRESENTED BY PRESENT ORDER OF THINGS INESCAPABLY BRINGS WITH IT A LOSS OF PRESTIGE FOR THE ARMED FORCES."

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4. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES PLH MANIFESTO NOT LIKELY TO MAKE MANY RIPPLES. IT WAS OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO KEEP PARTY ALIVE IN PUBRZC CONSCIOUSNESS AND MR RECORD FOR

CONSTITUTIONALITY AND THE ELECTORAL PROCESS ON WHICH ITS
LONGER- TERM SURVIVAL DEPENDS. AT SAME TIME, IT PROBABLY
INDICATES EFFORT TO CAPITALIZE SOMEWHAT ON DISAFFECTION
OF PRIVATE SECTOR, WHICH WAS PEAKING IN LATE MARCH,
OVER LOPEZ REGIME' S PRO- LABOR/ CAMPESINO BENT; WHILE
DECLARATION CALLS FOR " REVOLUTIONARY" CHANGES OF
STRUCTURE, BROAD AGRARIAN REFORM, ETC., IT SEEMS TO IMPLY
THAT PROPERLY CONSTITUTED LEGISLATURE (AND PLH) COULD
MANAGE NECESSARY SOCIAL READJUSTMENTS SO THEY SATISFIED
EVERYONE. GOVERNMENT WILL PROBABLY TAKE NO OVERT NOTE OF
POSITION PAPER AND, HAVING MADE ITS POINTS, PLH WILL GO
BACK, FOR A WHILE, TO WATCHING AND WAITING.
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